United Nations CEDAW/C/PRK/1

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
11 September 2002

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States Parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Initial report of States Parties

Democratic People's Republic of Korea*

Contents

		Page
	Introduction	3
	Part I General Survey	3
I.	Land and People	3
II.	General Political Structure	4
III.	General Legal Framework within which Human Rights Are Protected	6
IV.	Embodiment of Human Rights Conventions in Domestic Legislation	9
V.	Information and Publicity	9
	Part II Report on the Substantive Provisions	10
	Article 1. Definition of Discrimination against Women	10
	Article 2. Obligation to Eliminate Discrimination	11
	Article 3. The Development and Advancement of Women	13
	Article 4. Acceleration of Equality between Men and Women	15

* The present report is being issued without formal editing.

02-59658 (E) 141102

Article 5. Sex Roles and Stereotyping 15
Article 6. Exploitation of Women 16
Article 7. Political and Public Life 16
Article 8. International Representation and Participation 18
Article 9. Nationality 18
Article 10. Education 19
Article 11. Employment 22
Article 12. Equality in Access to Health Care 25
Article 13. Social and Economic Benefits 29
Article 14. Rural Women 30
Article 15. Equality before the Law and in Civil Matters 32
Article 16. Equality in Marriage and Family Law 34
Article 29. Arbitration 36

Annex

Statistical Tables 37

Introduction

1. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on February 27, 2001. The CEDAW came into effect on March 29, 2001 for the DPRK.

2. This is the initial report of the DPRK submitted under article 18 of the CEDAW. This report has been prepared in two parts in accordance with the Guidelines Regarding the Form and Content of the Initial Reports of States Parties adopted in February 1995 by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its 14th session and revised in January 1997 at its 16th session.

3. Part I provides the general survey of the DPRK and Part II specific information in relation to each provision of the Convention.

4. This report has been prepared by the National Coordination Committee of the DPRK for the Implementation of the CEDAW which is constituted by the officials of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, the Cabinet, such ministries concerned as the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Public Health and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and such institutions concerned as the Central Court and the Central Public Prosecutors Office.

PART I
GENERAL SURVEY

I. Land and People

A. Land

5. Korea, situated in the north-eastern part of the Asian continent, consists of the Korean peninsula and 4,198 islands around it. Its total area is 222,200 square kilometres, of which mountains constitute almost 80 percent. It is sea-bounded on three sides.

6. Korea was liberated from the Japanese colonial rule on 15 August 1945. It was divided into the north and the south at 38th parallel of north latitude soon after the liberation and then after the Korean War at the military demarcation line defined in the Armistice Agreement as the boundary. The area of the country over which the DPRK's sovereignty is exercised is 122,760 square kilometres.

B. People, language and religion

7. The DPRK is a homogeneous national state. The Koreans have lived on the Korean territory creating time-honoured history and culture in the process of forming the nation of one and the same blood inheriting the ancient Korean that evolved through the stages of primitive, Paleolithic and Neolithic man since the early era of human morphogenesis.

8. As of 2000, the population of the DPRK was 22,963,000. The capital city of Pyongyang had 3,084,400 people.

9. The national language is Korean. The Korean language is spoken throughout the whole territory as a sole national language. The Korean language has been created and developed by the Korean people through a long historical period, and is characterized by its homogeneity and purity.

10. The DPRK has no State religion. The State guarantees freedom of religion. There are Buddhism, Christianity, Roman Catholicism and Chondoism in the country.

II. General Political Structure

A. Brief political history

11. Korea was formed as a State before the thirtieth century B.C. and developed itself and its own culture. In the nineteenth century, however, the feudal State of Korea was gravely weakened by the corruption and incompetence of the feudal rulers.

12. Japan illegally fabricated the "Ulsa 5-point Treaty" in November 1905, the "Jongmi 7-point Treaty" in 1907 and the "Korea-Japan Amalgamation Treaty" in 1910 to usurp Korea's diplomatic right and sovereignty and turn Korea completely into its colony.

13. The Korean people waged a vigorous revolutionary struggle against the Japanese imperialist aggressors for 20 years under the leadership of the respected President Kim Il Sung. The Korean people achieved the historic cause of national liberation on 15 August 1945.

14. After the liberation, Korea was divided into the north and the south owing to the interference of foreign forces and the two sides traversed diametrically different courses, socialism in the north and capitalism in the south.

15. In the north, the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea was established on 8 February 1946 based on the local power organs formed in all areas on the initiative of the people and, under its guidance, democratic reforms were carried out to set up a genuine people's democratic system. And by the first democratic elections of historic significance, the People's Committee of North Korea was formed in February 1947 and the transition to socialism began.

16. In an effort to check the crisis of national break-up, general elections for a united central Government were held throughout the whole territory of the north and south of Korea in August 1948 and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, representing the interests of all the Korean people, was founded on 9 September 1948. The founding of the DPRK meant the advent of an independent people's power of a new type and was a historic proclamation of the birth of Juche Korea.

17. The DPRK has made an onward march through trying ordeals under the Juche idea.

18. The Korean people won the fatherland liberation war of 1950-1953 against foreign aggression and defended the Republic with honour. The Korean people completed the socialist transformation of the relations of production in towns and farm villages in only four to five years after the war and established the anthropocentric socialist system of the Korean style free from exploitation and oppression of man by man.

19. The DPRK, in the course of carrying out the tasks of socialist construction of various stages during the period of 1960s to 1990s, invincibly consolidated the people's power and the socialist system, relying on the one-minded unity and patriotic efforts of the entire people, the masters of the state and the society, and realized socialist industrialization to lay the foundation of an independent national economy. The Republic built the socialist culture contributory to enhancing the creativity of the working people and satisfying their healthy cultural and emotional needs and strengthened the national self-defense capability based on the all-people and nation-wide defense system.

20. Today, the Korean people, under the seasoned leadership of the respected Comrade Kim Jong Il, are making strenuous efforts to add glory to the man-centred socialist system of Korean style upholding the banner of the Juche idea, to build a powerful nation where the national power is strong, everything booms and the entire people

live without envy in the world, and to achieve the country's independent peaceful reunification, the supreme task of the nation.

B. General political structure

21. The political system of the DPRK is socialist democratic republicanism.

22. The power belongs to all the working people including workers, peasants and working intellectuals. The working people exercise power through the Supreme People's Assembly and local people's assemblies at all levels, their representative organs.

23. The system of State organs is composed of the system of power organs, the system of administrative organs and the system of judicial and procuratorial organs.

System of power organs

24. The System of power organs consists of the Supreme People's Assembly (SPA), the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly (PSPA), local people's assemblies and local people's committees.

25. The SPA is the highest power organ of the Republic. The SPA is composed of deputies elected on the principle of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot and its term of office is five years. The SPA exercises legislative power and the power of organizing leading State organs (such as the National Defense Commission, the PSPA, the cabinet, etc.), establishes the basic principles of domestic and foreign policies of the State, deliberates and approves the State plan for the development of the national economy, the State budget and its implementation result, discusses and decides important and principled political issues of the State.

26. The National Defense Commission (NDC) is the highest military leadership body of State power and the organ of overall administration of national defense. The NDC directs the whole armed forces and defense upbuilding of the State and is accountable to the SPA.

27. The PSPA is the highest organ of State power when the SPA is not in session. It deliberates and adopts the bills raised in the intervals between the SPA sessions, obtains the approval of the next session of the SPA for the important laws, supervises the law-observance by the State organs to take relevant measures, discusses and decides important issues for exercising the State power. The PSPA represents the State. The PSPA is accountable to the SPA.

28. The people's assembly of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county is the local organ of State power. The local people's assembly consists of deputies elected on the principle of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot and its term of office is four years. The local people's assembly is the local representative organ of the people and exercises such sovereignty within the given area as deliberating and approving the local plan for the development of the national economy, local budget and its implementation result, adopting measures to observe State laws in the area concerned, electing or recalling members of people's committee, judges and people's assessors of the court at the corresponding level, etc. The local power organs when the local people's assemblies are not in session are the people's committees of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county. The local people's committee is also the administrative and executive organ of State power at the corresponding level. The local people's committee consists of the chairman, vice-chairmen, secretary and members and its term of office is the same as that of the corresponding people's assembly. The local people's committee exercises the function of the local organ of State power when the corresponding people's assembly is not in session and exercises such sovereignty as convening sessions of people's assembly, organizing the election of deputies, working with the deputies, etc. The local people's committee is guided by the corresponding people's assembly and by the senior people's assemblies or committees and is accountable to them.

System of administrative organs

29. The system of administrative organs consists of the Cabinet and the local people's committees.

30. The Cabinet is the administrative and executive body of the highest State power and the organ of overall State administration. The Cabinet consists of the Premier, Vice-Premiers, Chairmen, Ministers and other members as required and its term of office is the same as that of the SPA. The Cabinet takes measures for the implementation of the State policies and laws, adopts the regulations on State administration on the basis of the Constitution and the laws, drafts the State plan for the development of the national economy and the State budget, adopts measures for their implementation, organizes and executes the work of industries, agriculture, education, science, culture, public health, external affairs, etc., organizes and executes the overall administrative and economic activities of the State. The Cabinet is accountable to the SPA, and, when it is not in session, to the PSPA.

31. The people's committees of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county exercises the function of the local organ of State power when the People's Assembly at the corresponding level is not in session and the administrative and executive organ of State power. The local people's committee organizes and carries out all administrative and economic work in the given area, is accountable to the corresponding people's assembly for its work and is subordinate to the people's committees at higher levels and the Cabinet.

System of judicial and procuratorial organs

32. The system of judicial and procuratorial organs consists of courts and public prosecutors offices.

33. The system of judicial organs is composed of the Central Court, the court of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), the people's court and the special court. The courts are constituted by judges and people's assessors who are elected by State power organs at all levels. The President of the Central Court is elected by the SPA, and its judges and people's assessors by the Presidium of the SPA. Judges and people's assessors of local courts are elected by the corresponding local people's assemblies. Judges of the special court are appointed by the Central Court and its people's assessors elected by soldiers of the unit concerned or by employees at their meetings. The Central Court is the highest judicial organ of the Republic and is accountable to the SPA and to the PSPA when the SPA is not in session. The local courts are accountable to their respective people's assemblies.

34. The system of procuratorial organs consists of the Central Public Prosecutors Office, the public prosecutors offices of the province (or municipality directly under central authority), city (or district) and county and the special public prosecutors office. The Prosecutor General of the Central Public Prosecutors Office is appointed by the SPA and public prosecutors of various levels by the Central Public Prosecutors Office. The procuratorial organs supervise the observance of laws. Investigation and prosecution are conducted under the unified direction of the Central Public Prosecutors Office, and all Public Prosecutors Offices are subordinate to their higher offices and the Central Public Prosecutors Office. The Central Public Prosecutors Office is accountable to the SPA and the PSPA when the SPA is not in session.

III. General Legal Framework within which Human Rights Are Protected

A. Legislative measures taken for human rights protection

35. The DPRK regards human rights as the independent rights which people ought to exercise as social beings in political, economic, cultural and every other sphere of social life and actively strives to protect and realize them.

36. Embodying the new philosophical principle that man is the master of everything and decides everything as well as the demands of the Juche idea that man be placed in the centre of all considerations concerning the nature and society and everything made to serve him, the respected President Kim Il Sung set forth the idea of human rights that man, the most precious being in the world, should be freed from all kinds of social subordinations and inequalities and enjoy an independent and creative life to the full.

37. The Juche-oriented idea of human rights was embodied in the Ten-Point Programme of the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland published in May 1936, when the anti-Japanese armed struggle was being waged.

38. With a view to ensuring completely the social and political rights of all people, article 6 of this Programme stipulates: "Freedom of speech, the press, assembly and association shall be realized, the Japanese terrorist rule and the remnants of feudal ideas opposed and all political prisoners released." And on human equality and respect of all people, article 7 states: "Discriminatory status systems and other inequalities shall be abolished, human equality of sex, nation, religion, etc. guaranteed, social position of women improved and the dignity of females respected."

39. In order to provide social, economic and cultural rights, the Programme and the Declaration of the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland advanced the "adoption of popular and democratic policies of economy and culture", "abolition of slave labour and education", enforcement of "free compulsory education" and "eight hour working day", "improvement of working conditions and raise of wage" and "relief of the unemployed masses."

40. After liberation, the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea set forth the programme for defending the people's rights and interests by the proclamation of the Twenty-Point Platform to be pursued by the democratic government that would be set up soon.

41. In accordance with the Platform, the Committee took various legislative measures for ensuring people their rights and freedom.

42. For the democratic socio-political reform and the democratization of the judicature, the Committee formulated the Rules of the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea (6 March 1946), the Basic Principles of the Composition and Function of the Judicial Board, the Court, and the Public Prosecutors' Office of the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea (6 March 1946), the Rules of the Criminal Justice of the North Korean Judicial Organs (14 May 1946) and the Law on the Criminal Hearing by the Public Prosecutors' Office and the Preliminary Examination or Security organs of North Korea (20 June 1946).

43. The legislation for securing democratic socio-economic reform includes the Law on the Agrarian Reform in North Korea (5 March 1946), the Law on Nationalization of Industries in North Korea (10 August 1946), the Labour Law for the Factory and Office Workers in North Korea (24 June 1946), the Law on Equality of Sexes (30 July 1946), etc.

44. In order to secure the democratization of social and cultural life, the Committee enacted the Law on the Protection of Life, Health, Freedom and Honour (24 January 1947), the Law on the Abolition of the Remnants of the Feudal Customs (24 January 1947), the Law on the Protection of Private Property (24 January 1947) and the Law on Crimes against Public Health (24 January 1947).

45. The People's Committee of North Korea, after its establishment in February 1947, approved democratic laws including the Law on Agrarian Reform and the Law on Equality of Sexes and adopted new laws and regulations to consolidate by law the achievement of democratic reform.

46. The DPRK, after its foundation in September 1948, adopted its Constitution (9 September 1948) to fix and reaffirm by law the achievement and successes and the democratic rights of the citizens in the sectors of political, economic, social and cultural life.

47. The DPRK took measures to fully protect the rights of citizens by promulgating the Law on Composition of the Court (1 March 1950), the Criminal Law (3 March 1950), the Criminal Procedures Act (3 March 1950) and other related laws.

48. The DPRK adopted the Socialist Constitution on 27 December 1972 in line with the established socialist system and amended it, in April 1992 and October 1998, to consolidate the successes of the socialist construction and to better protect the genuine democratic freedom and rights of the citizens.

49. On the basis of the Socialist Constitution, the DPRK constructed many relevant laws for the promotion and protection of human rights in keeping with the developing reality.

50. The DPRK instituted anew the Criminal Law and Criminal Procedures Act on 19 December 1974 and revised them on 5 February 1987 and on 15 January 1992 respectively.

51. The DPRK adopted the Civil Proceedings Act (10 January 1976), the Civil Law (5 September 1990) and the Family Law (24 October 1990).

52. The DPRK also enacted hundreds of laws and regulations such as the Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children (29 April 1976), the Labour Law (18 April 1978), the Public Health Law (3 April 1980), the Law on the Protection of the Environment (9 April 1986), the Law on Elections to the People's Assembly at all Levels (7 October 1992), the Citizenship Law (23 March 1995), the Appeal and Petition Law (17 June 1998), the Law on External Civil Relations (6 September 1995), the Law on Composition of the Court (1 July 1998), the Law on Lawyers (23 December 1993), the Notary Public Law (2 February 1995), the Education Law (14 July 1999), the Law on Prevention of Epidemics (5 November 1997), the Insurance Law (6 April 1995), the Foreign Trade Law (10 December 1997), etc. so that citizens may better enjoy their democratic rights and freedom, material and cultural life in all the political, economic, social and cultural fields.

B. General legislative structure for human rights protection

53. The major bodies responsible for democratic rights and freedom of the people are the people's committees at all levels. Judicial, procuratorial and people's security organs also assume important mission and function of protecting human rights. Besides, human rights protection work is conducted by the public organizations such as the Institute for the Research of Human Rights, the Association to Support the Disabled, the Committee on Measures for Compensation to the former <Comfort Women> for Japanese Army and the Pacific War Victims, the Democratic Lawyers' Association, the bar association, the youth league, trade unions, the women's union, etc.

54. There is a rehabilitation and compensation system for the citizens whose rights are infringed. Citizens may lodge a communication or an appeal with the State organs or judicial or other State organs when their rights are violated. The State organs examine the case in accordance with due procedures and have the victim properly rehabilitated or compensated if the communication or appeal prove to be reasonable. Unfairly detained or punished people are properly rehabilitated or compensated under the Law on Damages and the Regulation on Criminal Compensation.

55. The rights provided by the international instruments on human rights are reliably protected by the Constitution and other relevant laws and regulations. No right is either restricted or derogated from.

56. The DPRK Government makes every effort to implement the international human rights instruments with credit.

IV. Embodiment of Human Rights Conventions in Domestic Legislation

57. The provisions of the instruments are applied either directly or by being turned into domestic laws and regulations.

58. The DPRK has embodied the rights contained in the instruments in its laws and regulations as well as in the Constitution, and has taken or is taking practical measures to realize them. As a result, the rights are well protected. The DPRK citizens are sufficiently ensured true democratic freedom and rights. Non-discrimination is required by all the provisions of the Constitution that are related to citizens' rights.

59. Foreigners staying or residing in the DPRK also enjoy legal rights.

60. After ratifying several international human rights instruments, the DPRK amended and supplemented the Constitution and revised or adopted the Criminal Law, the Criminal Procedures Act, the Civil Law, the Family Law and others reflecting the requirements of the instruments. And following the accession to the CEDAW on February 27, 2001 while preparing the initial report, the DPRK comprehensively analyzed and reviewed the system to ensure women's rights that had been consolidated for more than 50 years as well as the experiences gained and had a debate on future development of the implementation of the CEDAW and the better guarantee of a worthwhile and happy life of every woman.

61. One odd year has passed since the DPRK acceded to the CEDAW. The accession proves to be very positive in arousing the awareness and efforts of the Government and the public to improve sex equality in accordance with the requirement of the Convention. The legal, institutional and administrative measures have basically been adopted for sex equality but there still remain some discriminative elements due to the remnants of the outmoded customs, and the recent economic difficulties obstruct the sufficient supply of material and cultural living conditions to the women provided by the law.

V. Information and Publicity

62. The Government took measures to inform the State organs, public organizations and the masses of the idea of the international human rights instruments. The Government actively disseminated relevant information through mass media and organized lectures, short courses and seminars on the occasion of the Human Rights Day and other international anniversaries. The texts of the instruments have been translated into Korean and disseminated to the people's power organs, judicial, procuratorial and people's security organs, economic, cultural organs and public organizations, and are taught in the regular higher educational institutions. The Compilation of International Instruments on Human Rights (Vol. I and II) and the Compilation of International Instruments on the Rights of the Child, etc. have been published in Korean and disseminated.

63. Upon the submission of the report on the implementation of the international human rights instruments to which the Government has acceded, the copies of the report and the information on its submission are disseminated to people's power organs at all levels, the ministries concerned, the judicial, procuratorial, people's security organs, the youth league, trade unions, the women's union, the bar association, the Institute for Research of Human Rights, and reported through mass media.

64. The DPRK paid deep attention to the preparation and dissemination of the report. The report was drafted by the National Coordination Committee for the Implementation of the CEDAW consisting of the officials of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, the Cabinet, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other related institutions, and the drafting was actively cooperated by various public organizations including the women's union and the youth league. The information and data were officially supplied by the state institutions and public organizations concerned. The draft was sent to different institutions and organizations for assessment and debate before it was completed. Like

the reports under other human rights instruments, this report has been disseminated to various institutions and organizations so that they may refer to it for the improvement of the rights and interests of women.

PART II
REPORT ON THE SUBSTANTIVE PROVISIONS

Article 1. Definition of Discrimination against Women

A. View on discrimination against women

65. The DPRK fixed its attention on the definition of discrimination against women put forward in the CEDAW when it was acceding to the Convention and was convinced that it coincided with the policy and legislation of the DPRK and had basically been embodied in practice.

66. The principle of sex equality is provided for in article 77 of the Constitution: "Women are accorded an equal social status and rights with men", in article 1 of the Law on Sex Equality: "Women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the state's economic, social, cultural and political life" and in article 18 of the Family Law: "The husband and the wife shall have equal rights within the family."

67. The Constitution, laws, regulations and rules of the DPRK comprehensively and concretely provide for the rights and freedom that citizens ought to be endowed with and enjoy in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil and all other fields. The term "citizen" denoting the subject of rights in the legal documents involves men and women without exception.

68. In the DPRK, discrimination against women is understood in the following way based on the constitutional principle of sex equality and the concrete legal rights that women are endowed with and enjoy:

- For the purpose of the CEDAW, woman means females at all ages including female minors.
- In the light of marital status, the inequality based on whether one is married or not is deemed to be discrimination against women.
- In the light of the spheres of public life, the inequality in political, economic, social, civil, public and private life is regarded as discrimination against women.
- In the light of the subjective factor, the consent to or tolerance of inequality against women either on purpose or by negligence is considered as discrimination against women.
- Inequality means differentiated treatment of men and women and includes distinction, exclusion, restriction, ignorance, impairing, violence, etc.

B. Historical background of sex equality

69. In the DPRK, discrimination against women has been eliminated and sex equality realized through a long history. In May, 1936, when a war was being fought against the Japanese military rule and for the liberation of the country, the respected President Kim Il Sung defined it as one of the major tasks of the anti-imperialist, anti-feudal democratic revolution to realize sex equality, enhance the social status of women and respect the dignity of women in the Ten-Point Programme of the Association for the Restoration of the Fatherland drawn up and promulgated personally by him.

70. On May 9, 1946, President Kim Il Sung, in his speech to the participants in the First Conference of the Democratic Women's Union of North Korea, stressed that the Korean women had long been so maltreated both in society and within the family due to the out-dated feudalistic idea of predominance of man over woman that they had been unable to dream of social life, under severe personal fetters with no freedom of marriage or outdoor activities and even traded like goods, and the situation of women had been particularly miserable and pitiable during the 36-year long Japanese colonial rule. He proceeded to say that women should not only be given equal political and economic rights with men but also be attentively cared for as they shouldered heavy maternal burden. This teaching of the President served as an important programmatic guiding principle in the efforts of the people and the Government to eliminate the discrimination against women and to completely settle the issue of women.

71. On July 30, 1946, President Kim Il Sung took the historical epoch-making step of reforming all of the sex inequality and enabling women to widely participate in every cultural, social and political life, by promulgating the Law of North Korea on Sex Equality.

72. In the course of a number of social revolution and development for more than half a century up to now, the content of and the guarantees for sex equality have ceaselessly been developed and enriched. Equality between men and women has been realized in such a degree that the word "discrimination against women" sounds unfamiliar to people now. Sex equality being not confined by simple equality, the policies and legislation of the State reflect the concept of attaching more importance to women, and their enforcement is now a natural ethical obligation and a life tone of the whole society going beyond the limit of legal obligation.

Article 2. Obligation to Eliminate Discrimination

A. Legal and institutional measures

73. It is the invariable policy of the DPRK Government and the obligation of every institution, enterprise and organization to condemn discrimination against women in all its forms and to completely realize equality between men and women.

74. The DPRK adopted the Law on Sex Equality on July 30, 1946, which provided for the elimination of discrimination against women. The full text reads as follows:

"Article 1. Women shall have equal rights with men in all spheres of the State's economic, social, cultural and political life.

Article 2. Women shall have equal right with men to vote and to be elected for local and State supreme organs.

Article 3. Women shall have equal right with men to labour, pay, social insurance and education.

Article 4. Women shall have equal right with men to free marriage.

Article 5. Should the conditions occur under which marital relationship is difficult and may not be maintained, women shall have equal right with men to freely divorce. The right of women to legal proceedings to let ex-husband pay for the upbringing of children shall be recognized and the legal proceedings for divorce and the expense of child-upbringing shall be dealt with by people's courts.

Article 6. The minimum age for marriage shall be 17 years for females and 18 years for males.

Article 7. The State shall hereafter forbid such violations of female human rights as polygamy and traffic in women as a wife or a concubine, the remnants of the mediaeval feudalism. The licensed or unlicensed prostitution and Kisaeng system (Kisaeng service, Kisaeng school etc.) shall be forbidden. Anyone who offends against the above provision shall be punished by law.

Article 8. Women shall have equal rights with men to inherit property or land and to have a share of property or land at the time of a divorce.

Article 9. Along with the promulgation of this law the Japanese imperialist laws and regulations relating to the rights of the Korean women shall be nullified."

75. The principles of sex equality and non-discrimination as well as other concrete ideas going with them advanced by the Law on Sex Equality were comprehensively reflected in the Democratic Constitution of 1948 and were further elaborated by the Socialist Constitution of 1972, when all the sources of exploitation and oppression had been eliminated.

76. The current Constitution has legalized the principles of sex equality and non-discrimination by providing that citizens enjoy equal rights in all spheres of State and public activity (article 65), and women are accorded an equal social status and rights with men (article 77). The Constitution also provides that women are guaranteed, enjoy and exercise on an equal footing with men such basic rights as the right to vote and to be elected (article 66), the freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, demonstration and association (article 67), the freedom of religious beliefs (article 68), the right to submit complaints and petitions (article 69), the right to work (article 70), the right to relaxation (article 71), the right to free medical care (article 72), the right to education (article 73), the freedom to engage in scientific, literary and artistic pursuits (article 74), the freedom of residence and travel (article 75), the inviolability of the person and the home and privacy of correspondence (article 79), etc.

77. The constitutional provision of sex equality and the basic rights of women is by itself the highest legal requirement and is elaborated and realized by the laws, regulations, decisions and directives concerned. The latter should always be in support of the constitutional principle and requirement and any discriminative deviation from the former is nullified.

B. Status of the CEDAW

78. In the legislation on sex equality and the rights of women, the CEDAW is in the same status as a domestic law. Like other international conventions, the ideas of the CEDAW are basically embodied in the domestic laws. But if any idea of the convention is either not reflected or provided differently in a domestic law (except the reservations), the convention is given priority in accordance with article 17 of the Treaty Law adopted in December, 1998: "An institution that has concluded a treaty ought to fulfill without fail the obligation under the treaty." Priority of international convention in case a domestic legislation is different from it is also provided for in article 10 of the Civil Law, article 6 of the Law on External Civil Relations, article 7 of the Law on Foreign Investment-Business Enterprise and Foreign Individual Tax, article 37 of the Customs Law and article 5 of the Copyright Law.

C. Machinery for CEDAW implementation

79. On September 10, 2001 the National Coordination Committee for the Implementation of the CEDAW was organized consisting of the officials of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly, the Cabinet, such ministries concerned as the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Public Health and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Central Court, the Central Public Prosecutors Office and other organs. The Committee oversees the implementation of the convention, disseminates the convention, drafts the report on the implementation, coordinates the issues arising and takes due measures.

D. Indemnification for discrimination against women

80. In the DPRK, discrimination against women is indemnified for by various legal procedures.

81. Procedures of complaint and petition: Article 69 of the Constitution stipulates: "Citizens are entitled to submit complaints and petitions. The State shall fairly investigate and deal with complaints and petitions as fixed by law." And the Law on Complaint and Petition provides for the procedures of submitting, acceptance, registration, investigation of and dealing with the complaint or petition. Under this, women are entitled to submit complaints or petitions demanding the interruption of the infringement upon their rights and interest by discrimination and the due indemnification. The State institution that has received a complaint registers it, immediately goes out to the site to meet with the complainer and takes the steps of indemnification for the rights encroached upon.

82. Criminal procedures: A person who illegally as well as discriminatively restricts the liberty of a woman, or insults or impairs the honour of a woman is committed to a reform institution for up to two years respectively by articles 151 and 152 of the Criminal Law, and a man who rapes a woman by using violence or threat or by taking advantage of her when she is helpless is punished gravely by article 153 of the same law. The Criminal Law also strictly prohibits the encroachment upon the life and health of woman, which deserves punishment according to gravity. And under article 19 of the Criminal Procedures Act, a woman who has suffered loss or damage owing to a severe discrimination against woman or other criminal act may lodge before the court a claim for damages against the person responsible.

83. Criminal procedures: A woman may bring a suit to the court in order to have her civil rights that have been illegally prejudiced compensated for. The court examines the case and settles it subject to article 129 of the Civil Proceedings Act.

84. Criminal compensation procedures: The Regulation on Criminal Compensation provides in article 2: "The State shall compensate the person who has been innocently arrested, confined or punished by the investigation or preliminary examination organ or the court for the spiritual and physical sufferings and property loss. The State compensation shall be undertaken by the investigation or preliminary examination organ or the court responsible for having handled the innocent person." and puts forward the concrete procedures and methods of the criminal compensation. Under this regulation, a woman who has been illegally arrested or detained may be compensated for her spiritual and physical sufferings as well as property loss in case she is released by the order of a public prosecutor or is acquitted by the court.

85. In the DPRK, the State policy, law or regulation has the provisions of female preference, but not the provisions of discrimination against women. However, the remaining old traditional customs have some elements which are not in line with the requirement of the CEDAW.

86. One example is the age of marriage for which the DPRK made reservation when acceding to the Convention. The Family Law provides that the minimum age of marriage is 17 for female and 18 for male in view of the traditional custom that a man marries a woman younger than he is. The sexual difference in the age of marriage is not regarded as a discrimination against women among the Korean people, but might be interpreted as such under the CEDAW. Hence the reservation about article 2 (f) of the Convention.

Article 3. The Development and Advancement of Women

A. Legislative measures

87. The DPRK Government considers that it is most important for women's equal exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms with men to ensure women the conditions for the full development and

advancement, and has made every effort to take legislative, administrative and other appropriate measures for this.

88. The fundamental guarantee for the advancement of women is contained in the Constitution which provides for the basic freedoms and rights of citizens in political, economic, social and cultural life. By the Constitution, all female citizens find themselves in the position of masters of the State and society and conduct the activities for their development and advancement. Article 64 particularly underscores that the State should effectively guarantee the genuine democratic rights and freedoms as well as the material and cultural well-being of all its citizens, male or female, and that they are amplified with the consolidation and development of the social system.

89. The constitutional provisions on the advancement of status, education, training, employment, etc. of women are elaborated in the laws and regulations concerned. The legislative measures for the advancement of women's political status are provided for by the Citizenship Law, the Election Law, the Law on the Local Power Organs, etc.; for the advancement of women's status in civil and family life by the Civil Law, the Civil Proceedings Act, the Family Law, etc.; for the education and training of women by the educational laws and their enforcement regulations; for women's employment by the Labour Law, the laws and enforcement regulations on labour.

B. State institutions and public organizations

90. The State institutions for the development and advancement of women include above all the people's committees at all levels. Under the socialist system of the DPRK, the people's committees assume the mission and obligation to be entirely responsible for and take care of the political, material and cultural life of all the inhabitants, male or female, of their region as the householder. The people's committees have the machinery to look after the life of women and ensure their development and advancement through planning, fulfillment of the plan and other measures.

91. The State institutions include the public prosecutorial organs at all level. They grasp on regular basis the implementation of the laws of the State and the decisions or directives of the State organs concerned for the advancement and development of women in the capacity of the inspector of law observance to redress in time the unlawful phenomena if any.

92. The State institution for the improvement of the women's rights under the CEDAW is the National Coordination Committee for the Implementation of the CEDAW.

93. The public organizations include the Korean Democratic Women's Union. The union represents 3 million working women and has its branch organizations in each province, city and county. The union disseminates among women the progressive thoughts and knowledge, proposes recommendations to legislative, administrative and judicial organs for the development and advancement of women, collects and informs the organs concerned of the facts and data of women's right protection and enjoyment and tries to enhance the role of women in the nursing and upbringing of children.

94. Besides, there are the Women's Association, the woman's magazine publishing house and 20 odd training centres including the training centres for nursery or kindergarten teachers, for female child education officials, for breast feeding mothers, etc. The women's union and the association run for mothers the day of child education once every week. There are also 10 odd research institutes for women including the Institute for the Research of Mothers' Health Care.

Article 4. Acceleration of Equality between Men and Women

95. The DPRK accelerates de facto equality between men and women through preferential treatment of women and temporary special measures. The preferential treatment and special measures are based on the consideration of the physiological and other characteristics peculiar to women and the intention to prevent or overcome more thoroughly the possible discrimination against women arising therefrom.

96. On September 13, 1985, the DPRK Government issued Directive No.79 of the Administration Council to take the measure of increasing the education scope of female officials in various fields, of training female officials in a planned way and of reeducating the women on the job so that more women might improve their proficiency and be admitted into the State administrative and economic institutions.

97. The Government also directed that the administrative and economic institutions establish a correct viewpoint towards women, increase the number of female officials and admit more of the housewives who had a university or college diploma into their bodies or other nonproductive sectors. To this end, the temporary special measures were taken to ensure the proportion of women at least at 10-15% among the officials above deputy director's level, 20-25% among division chiefs and senior staff, 15% among the management officials of heavy industry and agriculture, 20% in light industry, communications, food administration, etc. 30% in education, culture and the press, and 36% in finance. bank and commerce.

98. In 1999, the Government amended and supplemented the Regulation on Labour Placement by Directive No. 75 of the Cabinet providing that every institution, enterprise or organization should reasonably define the jobs and types of occupation for women and secure the proportion of women in the labour composition in different sectors of national economy. In December 1999, the Cabinet enacted the Regulation on the Management of Housewives' Work team or Sideline Work team and the Welfare Service of Housewives by its Directive No. 90 so that the housewives might widely join the work teams for them and conduct welfare service activities. All this was intended to encourage women's employment.

99. The Government elaborated the requirement of the Constitution and the Labour Law for labour protection of women in the Regulation on Labor Safety and Protection by providing that the institutions and enterprises should pay special attention to the labour protection of women, provide them with the jobs suitable to their physiological characteristics and constitution and ensure the conditions and facilities for their labour safety and sanitation. The Regulation includes such detailed issues as prevention of women from toilsome or harmful labour, prohibition of night shift for a mother of a baby or a pregnant woman, placement of pregnant women to light jobs, guarantee of 150-day maternity leave which includes 60 days before and 90 days after childbirth, supply of the full salary during the maternity leave, supply of child nursing time to baby-suckling mothers within the workday, equipment of institutions and enterprises with individual toilet, nursery, kindergarten, children's ward and welfare facilities for women, arrangement for women who work on their feet to have 10-minute rest every hour, old-age pension for the women whose length of service is more than 25 years and other conveniences for women's service. These measures enable women to improve their health and income through proper work, enjoy human dignity and actively contribute to the development of the Sate and community.

Article 5. Sex Roles and Stereotyping

100. Following the national liberation from the Japanese colonial rule, the DPRK thoroughly carried out the democratic reforms to free people from all forms of imperialist and feudalistic yoke and fetters. In this course, the political, economic, traditional and customary bases of discrimination against women have fundamentally been eliminated and the overall institutional, administrative, organizational and educational measures adopted to prevent its occurrence or continuance. The efforts to do away with every remnant of sex inequality have been ceaselessly intensified for half a century since then, whereby the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either

of the sexes or the stereotyped roles for men and women have nearly been eliminated and the discrimination based on the outmoded customs is no longer a big issue of social concern.

101. But there still exist such customary discriminations as calling a man the outer householder and a woman the inner householder in a family, a man becoming the head of a family, the community employing mostly females in the jobs like restaurant reception, switchboard operation, typing and the like, regarding a hard or big work as a man's job and an easy or sundry task as a woman's job etc.

102. These phenomena are a matter not only of prejudice and custom but also of the national situation of economic development. The DPRK is on the way of development economically and technologically, and is undergoing severe economic difficulties due to the economic blockade from outside and the natural disasters.

103. In order to overcome the economic and technical backwardness handed over by the old society, the DPRK is dynamically pushing ahead with the 3 major tasks of the technical revolution including the drastic reduction of the differences between heavy and light work and between industrial and agricultural work and emancipation of women from the heavy burden of household chores. If the 3 major tasks of the technical revolution have been fulfilled and the high-leveled economic and technical advance realized, the discrimination caused by stereotyped roles will be eliminated.

104. As was mentioned, the customary discrimination against women has not been an issue of great social concern and thereby the governmental or social declaration of special programme or policy has not been considered as necessary. But to enhance the consciousness of respecting women among the new generations and to thoroughly prevent the discriminatory conception and happening occasionally witnessed among the old generation, the DPRK encourages the active education in and popularization of the idea of respecting and caring for the female at schools and through mass media.

Article 6. Exploitation of Women

105. There used to be the systems of licensed or unlicensed prostitution, Kisaeng and traffic in women in the days of the Japanese colonial rule but by the strict legal prohibition immediately after the national liberation in 1945 and the rehabilitation of the victims in the community, such phenomena have long been forgotten. In the DPRK, traffic in women and prostitution are regarded as the most shameful crime and there has not been a report of such a case for many years.

106. As a precautionary measure to thoroughly prevent the sexual encroachment and exploitation of women, such conducts are provided for in the Criminal Law. Article 153 of the law states that a man who rapes a woman by using violence or threat or by taking advantage of her when she is helpless, or a man who has sexual intercourse with a girl under the age of 15 shall be punished gravely. Article 154 also stipulates that a man who obliges a woman who is his subordinate officially or by duty to have sexual intercourse with him shall be punished. These legal provisions serve as the strict control measures against sexual encroachment and exploitation of women.

Article 7. Political and Public Life

107. In the DPRK, great attention has been directed to the wide participation of women in the political and public life so that the female constituting half of population may become the true masters of the State and society on an equal footing with men.

A. Right to vote and to be elected

108. Women are entitled to participate in the exercise of the State power according to their will through the Supreme People's Assembly and the people's assemblies at all levels. The Constitution provides in article 4: "The sovereignty of the DPRK resides in the workers, peasants, working intellectuals and all other working people. The working people exercise power through their representative organs – the Supreme People's Assembly and local people's assemblies at all levels" and in the article 66: "All the citizens who have reached the age of 17 have the right to elect and to be elected, irrespective of sex, race, occupation, length of residence, property status, education, party affiliation, political views or religion." The Law on Election to the People's Assembly at All Levels underscores the constitutional idea of general election and stipulates that the DPRK citizens residing in a foreign country may also be elected to the Supreme People's Assembly and vote if he or she wishes in case an election takes place during his or her stay at the homeland, elaborating the principle of universal, equal and direct suffrage, the method of secret voting and other concrete procedures.

109. There is no restriction upon the exercise by women of the right to vote and to be elected. The election to the 10th Supreme People's Assembly in 1998 was participated in by 99.9% of woman voters and elected 687 deputies among whom 20.1% was female. The proportion of women among the deputies to the provincial, city or county people's assemblies was 21.9%.

B. Right to take part in State and economic administration

110. Women are entitled to be public officials on equal terms with men. This right is guaranteed by article 65 of the Constitution, which provides for equality in every sphere of State and public activity.

111. The DPRK has been making efforts to improve the social status and role of women to the level of men by increasing the proportion of female cadres and officials in the central organs, State and economic bodies, political party and public organization as well as in the factories, enterprises and cooperative farms. As of 2001, the proportion of women among the administrative officials was 70% in the fields of public health, commerce and child nursing or upbringing, 34% in education, communications and culture, 15% in industry, agriculture, construction, etc. And 10% of judges were female.

112. Women take an active part in the legislation and formulation of government policies. For example, female experts and lawyers played an important part in the drafting of the Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children, the Public Health Law and the Education Law. Women widely join the public debate on the bills of the State and the plans of Government policy to suggest their opinions and contribute to the discussion in the cadres' meetings or conferences. They have their will and requirements met through proposal, petition and other media of State administration and promote the development of the State and community by responsibly carrying out the decisions, directives and administrative or economic tasks advanced by the State bodies.

113. The Government took various measures to enable women to hold the posts of State officials and actively join the political and public activities. Above all the work ability of women was enhanced for the improvement of female proportion in public offices, which require the ability assessment. The 11-year compulsory free education system includes all females but this alone is not enough for the elevation of female proportion among State officials. Universities and colleges are encouraged to enroll more females than ever and the female reserve cadres are trained in a planned way.

114. In order to expand women's participation in the State political and public activities, the State gives wide publicity to the achievements and exploits of exemplary women and confer on them tens of such honorary titles and official commendations as the labour heroine, the national flag order, the labour order, the people's or merited scientist, the people's or merited artiste and the people's or merited sportswoman, etc.

C. Right to join political and public organizations

115. Women widely join various political and public organizations for their public activities. The Workers' Party of Korea, the Korean Social Democratic Party and the Korean Chondoist Chongu Party which are the legitimate political parties have a high percentage of woman members and not a few women in the responsible posts. Besides 3 million women are members of the women's union and many women are members of the trade unions, the agricultural workers' union, the youth league, the unions of literature and art, the Korean Democratic Lawyers' Association, the Christians Federation, the Buddhists Federation, the Committee for Afro-Asian Solidarity and tens of other public organizations.

Article 8. International Representation and Participation

116. Women are entitled to occupy diplomatic and international posts on equal terms with men. There is no policy or legislation to restrict or exclude women's international activities.

117. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other external organs as well as the external affairs departments of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Public Health, the academy of sciences, etc. have many woman officials who engage themselves in foreign service at the international level. In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs women account for 15% of the diplomatic service including 5 directors or officials of the same level, 6 deputy directors or officials of the same level and 9 division directors. And 4.7% of the diplomats working abroad are female.

118. A woman is entitled to hold a diplomatic position together with her husband, whereby many women serve in the institutions and diplomatic missions abroad on an equal footing with men.

119. Delegations to international conferences include women. And many women are sent to the meetings, seminars, training courses, etc. hosted by the UNESCO, the WHO and other special or local bodies under the UN.

120. The Korean Democratic Women's Union, the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and other public organizations take an active part in the activities of such international organizations as the Women's International Democratic Federation, the International Women's Union for Freedom and Peace, etc. as their members.

121. The percentage of women is lower in foreign service than in domestic service. The Government pays special attention to the training of female diplomats in view of the growing foreign relations and diplomatic service in recent years. The University of Foreign Studies and the foreign language faculties of other universities guarantee 40% of female admission, the secondary and higher educational institutions promote foreign language education and special courses are organized in different fields for foreign language education.

Article 9. Nationality

A. Equal right to acquire, change or retain nationality

122. The DPRK Citizenship Law provides for the principle of sex equality in acquiring, changing and retaining nationality. The nationality of a wife is not automatically changed by her marriage to an alien, or by the change of her husband's nationality during marriage.

123. The Citizenship Law is based primarily on jus sanguinis and in some special cases on jus soli. Article 5 of the law stipulates that the DPRK citizenship shall be granted to a child born between the DPRK citizens, a child

born between a DPRK citizen residing in the DPRK and a foreign citizen or a stateless person, a child born between stateless persons residing in the DPRK and a child born in the DPRK but whose parents are unidentified.

124. Under the Citizenship Law, a stateless person or a foreign citizen may acquire the DPRK citizenship by application (article 6), either of the parents who have the DPRK citizenship may change his or her citizenship (article 10), the DPRK citizenship does not change by marriage, divorce, adoption or its dissolution (article 11), a person who has lost his or her DPRK citizenship may restore it by application (article 12).

B. Equality in determining the nationality of a child

125. Women have equal rights with men in determining the nationality of their child.

126. By article 7 of the Citizenship Law, the citizenship of a child born between a DPRK citizen and a foreign citizen is determined as follows:

- The citizenship of a child under the age of 14 is determined in accordance with the intention of his or her parents, and if parents are unknown, in accordance with that of his or her guardian. If in this case his or her parents or guardian do not declare their express intention with respect to the child's citizenship during three months after birth the DPRK citizenship is granted.
- The citizenship of a minor who is over 14 is determined by the express intention of his or her parents and the consent of the minor and, if parents are unknown, by the express intention of his or her guardian and the consent of the minor. If in this case the minor's intention is not in line with that of his or her parents or guardian, the minor's express intention is followed.
- The citizenship of a major is determined by his or her own express intention.

127. By article 9 of the Citizenship Law, if parents acquire or annul the DPRK citizenship, the citizenship of their child changes as follows:

- The citizenship of a child under the age of 14 changes in conformity with that of his or her parents.
- The citizenship of a child who is over 14 and under 16 years of age changes only by the express intention of his or her parents and the consent of the child. If in this case the parents do not have any intention or differ with their child, the child's intention is followed.

128. By article 10, the citizenship of a child does not change even if either of the parents who have the DPRK citizenship, changes it.

129. By article 7, paragraph 1 of the Citizenship Law, the citizenship of a child under the age of 14 born between a DPRK citizen residing in a foreign country and a foreign citizen is determined in accordance with the express intention of his or her parents. Now that many DPRK citizens live abroad and different countries have different citizenship laws, the parents of different citizenship may not come to an agreement in determining the citizenship of their child and this non-agreement may last for more than 3 months which is the minimum period under the DPRK Citizenship Law. For this reason, article 9, paragraph 2 of the CEDAW has been provisionally reserved.

Article 10. Education

A. Education policy

130. The fundamental objective of education in the DPRK is to bring up all students, male and female, into able independent and creative beings and fine members of the country and the society who are knowledgeable,

virtuous and healthy. Under the policy of giving top priority to education, the State spares nothing for the education of the new generation.

131. All citizens both male and female fully enjoy the right to education thanks to the advanced educational system and popular education policies. The right to education and the guarantee of its realization are stipulated comprehensively in the Constitution and the educational legislation. At present there are about 5,000 primary schools and senior secondary schools respectively, over 400 colleges and over 200 universities.

B. Equality in the opportunity of education

132. According to article 73 (right to education) and article 76 (sex equality) of the Constitution, girls are ensured the same right and opportunity as boys with respect to admission into school. The female proportion at primary schools is 48.7%, at senior secondary schools 48.7% and at universities 34.4%.

C. 11-year compulsory free education

133. The universal 11-year compulsory free education has been enforced since 1972. This education consists of 1 year pre-school education, 10-year primary (4 years) and senior secondary school (6 years) education. After the 11-year education, every student is entitled to higher education in accordance with his or her wish and qualities.

134. All education institutions are co-educational.

135. Since March, 1959, when tuition fee system was abolished by the decision of the Cabinet, completely free school education has been in force in all educational institutions including universities. The State provides the full-time students of universities and colleges with scholarships and the part-time students on the job with salaries on top of the free education.

136. Students are educated in the same curriculum irrespective of their sex. But in senior secondary schools, girls have such subject as female hygienics, etc. separately.

D. Vocational and technical education

137. There is a well-organized vocational and technical education system available for systematically enhancing the technical skill of the women and other working people who have not had higher education. In order to make all working people well acquainted with the science and technology of their fields as well as the machines and equipments they operate the State offers them scientific, technical and vocational education at the factory colleges, farm colleges, fishing ground colleges, skill training schools, centers or courses and field classes on the farm.

138. In factory colleges, the workers of the corresponding factories and enterprises who have finished senior secondary school are given lectures for two hours a day on an average after work. The manager of the factory and enterprise is concurrently the president of the college while vice-president and teachers are full-time educationalists. The term is 5 years, the total curriculum consists of 3,400 hours and the graduates qualify as engineers.

139. In skill training schools, the senior secondary school graduates who go into work are given necessary vocational education, while the low-skilled workers being re-educated to enhance their skill. Its term is basically one year, but in some types of occupation the term is two or three years long. In the total number of hours under curriculum, theoretical education on basic technology and special subjects accounts for 30%, while practice in education and production for 70%, so that the students can be possessed of the knowledge and skill necessary for the job concerned.

140. Skill training courses are organized in different production units and occupational types to give lectures for two hours a week and 100 hours a year in conformity with the actual conditions of the factory or enterprise by the technicians and highly skilled workers.

141. Apprentice training courses are organized for the workers who are directly appointed to factories and enterprises without passing through skill training schools and other non-qualified workers to be possessed of the necessary technical knowledge within a short term through intensive lectures and apprenticeship.

142. The part-time education system plays an important role in meeting the ever-increasing demand for engineers, experts and skilled workers, and in letting them acquire the practical knowledge.

143. In heavy industrial factories and enterprises the proportion of the women who get technical and vocational education is less than half. But it is nearly opposite in health, commercial and light industrial sectors. This is because such sectors correspond with the characteristics of women.

144. Women are also given various forms of social education, on equal terms with men, while working in the society. In particular, such public organizations as women's union organize and conduct the educational courses to raise women's technical and cultural level through mothers' schools. Mothers' schools are open in the factories, enterprises and residential districts that have many women.

145. There is no restriction on women's access to vocational, technical or social education according to their wish and aptitude, and their equal rights with men.

E. Elimination of the gender-based customary discrimination against women

146. Half a century has passed since the promulgation of the Law on Sex Equality which stipulates legal rights of women to take part in all fields of State activities and social life, on equal terms with men. Therefore, no gender-based customary discrimination against women arises in ensuring women equal access to textbooks, curricula, teaching methods, scholarships and so on.

F. Elimination of illiteracy

147. Illiteracy was completely eliminated by the end of 1949 thanks to the Campaign for Crusade against Illiteracy conducted after the national liberation in 1945. Thanks to the universal compulsory primary school education system enforced in 1956, all children of school age came to get primary education, so illiteracy disappeared both in rural and urban areas. The second multi-indicators survey held in 2000 verified that the educational level of women was above the secondary education level, and the literacy rate of population 100%.

G. School drop-out

148. As the 11-year universal compulsory education system is being enforced, there is no drop-out at the primary or secondary schools. According to the Regulations for the Enforcement of the Education Law (April 2000) , anybody temporarily leaving school in mid-course of secondary general education because of disease or other reason, may continue schooling before he or she gets 19 years old.

H. Preferential social treatment of teachers

149. It is an important policy of the Government and a moral trait of social members to preferentially treat and respect teachers in the community. Many teachers participate in the affairs of the State as deputies to the Supreme People's Assembly and the people's assemblies at all levels.

150. The recent successive natural disasters from 1994 produced various economic difficulties and hindered progress in education. The flood in 1995 alone caused sufferings among kindergarten or school children of 145 counties, washed away, destroyed or submerged 4,120 kindergartens and 2,290 schools, and damaged or carried away a lot of equipments and textbooks. The subsequent natural disasters for several years did tremendous damage to the country's economy and people's livelihood and severely weakened the material and technical foundations of education. In particular, due to the shortage of food, teachers and schoolchildren were not provided with adequate food, and such education-related units as paper factories, education equipment factories were harmed, as a result of which the people were faced with paper shortage and other difficulties.

151. In order to normalize education in the disaster areas, the Government took appropriate measures such as intensive State assistance and additional State budgetary expenditure, and made efforts to rehabilitate school education to the pre-damage level. Many international organizations including UNICEF, WFP, UNESCO as well as governments of various countries and non-governmental organizations actively helped the Korean people in their endeavors to clear the aftereffects of natural disasters in the field of education.

152. As equality of men and women has been realized in all fields of social life under the Law on Sex Equality promulgated already half a century ago, and most of the people have been educated and brought up after the liberation, the customary discrimination against women in the field of education has long been forgotten. The outdated concept of predominance of man over woman among some old people in rural areas hardly affects education.

Article 11. Employment

153. The employment policy of the Government is to guarantee women the right to work, the right to employment opportunity, the right to free choice of profession, the right to technical and vocational education, the right to equal remuneration in respect of work of equal value, the right to protection of health, the right to safe working conditions and the right to social security, on the basis of equality of men and women.

A. Right to work

154. In the DPRK, labour is the independent and creative activity of the working people freed from exploitation and oppression. Every citizen has the right to work. This right is guaranteed by the Constitution, the Labour Law and its enforcement regulation and rules.

155. Article 70 of the Constitution provides: "Citizens have the right to work" and article 31 of the Labour Law states: "The State shall provide all conditions for women to take part in social labour".

B. Employment opportunity and free choice of profession

156. It is the responsibility and obligation of the State to ensure the realization of women's inviolable right to work by providing all citizens, male and female, with the same employment opportunities. With the rapid growth of the national economy, the requirement for labour increases but the resource of labour is limited which needs more women's labour.

157. Women's working age is from 16 to 55 but the women older than 55 may still work if they wish and have the ability to work.

158. Women are free in the choice of employment in conformity with their technology, knowledge, aptitude and wish. The State allocates female graduates of various schools to the jobs of their choice. The women who may not go to work for poor health or other reasons work in the sideline workteam, housewives' workteam or cooperative,

etc. according to their wish and ability and the disabled women also have the jobs suitable to their constitution and ability if they wish.

159. Following article 77, paragraph 3 of the Constitution, the Government has established rice-cooking houses, food processing factories, morning and evening shops and other public welfare facilities in the residential districts, nurseries and kindergartens in the institutions and enterprises with woman employees and secures women baby-nursing time within workday so that women may free themselves from household chores and join public labour.

C. Technical and vocational education

160. The State has set up various types of technical and vocational education facilities including factory colleges and skill training centers at the site of factories and enterprises to enable the newly admitted senior secondary school graduates and woman workers to receive technical and vocational education and meet the growing demand of different sectors of the national economy for skilled workers (refer to paragraphs 137-145 of the report).

D. Equal remuneration for equal work

161. Women and men get equal remuneration in respect of work of equal value. Article 70 of the Constitution states: "Citizens work according to their abilities and are paid in accordance with the quantity and quality of their work" and article 37 of the Labour Law reads: "Irrespective of their sex, age and race, the working people receive equal remuneration for equal work."

162. The principle of equal remuneration for equal work is realized by the remuneration in accordance with the quantity and quality of the work done under the unitary salary ranking system adopted by the State in the industrial field and under the work-point assessment system in the agricultural field. Salaries are determined under the principle of compensation for the physical and mental consumption by labour and guarantee of the life of the workers and in consideration of various facts including the worker's technical skill, labour intensity, work conditions, etc.

163. By the unitary national system of labour assessment, nobody is excepted from the principle of equal remuneration for equal work. In addition to the normal salary equal to men, women get supplementary pay by legal provisions. Decision No.88 of the Administration Council, April 1993, stipulates that female workers of over 6-month pregnancy be given light work until the time of her maternity leave and be provided with the average salary or the fixed salary if the former is estimated to be less than the latter, and the women with more than 3 children work for 6 hours a day but get the salary equal to 8-hour workday.

E. Health protection and safe working conditions

164. The State put forward as a most important task of enterprises the active protection and promotion of the life and health of workers by supplying them with safe, cultural and hygienic work conditions.

165. The State strictly adheres to the principle of giving priority to labour protection in production activities. By article 54 of the Labour Law no one is allowed to put people to work before giving them the technical knowledge on labour safety in their particular branch. The technical universities, colleges and the skill training centres give the education in labour protection and the institutions, enterprises and social cooperative organizations set up the Room for Labour Safety Education to instruct newly admitted workers about labour safety.

166. The State pays special attention to ensuring women's safe, cultural and hygienic work conditions and environment. Article 49 of the Regulation on Labour Protection adopted by Cabinet Decision No. 68 in 1999

provides: "Institutions and enterprises shall direct special attention to the labour protection of female workers, give them the jobs suitable to their physiological characteristics and constitution and supply them with the labour protection conditions and labour sanitation facilities". Under this regulation, women are prohibited from harmful labour including the work that deals with poisonous matters, labour in a place warmer than 30°c or of severe coldness, or where the relative humidity is over 80% without special protection facilities, work related with radioactive or other harmful rays, or in excessive noise and vibration, the labour of pulling or dragging, labour in water, labour inside a pit of a coal or ore mine, the labour of carrying by hand an object heavier than 20kg for more than 4 hours a day, etc. And the mother of a baby or a pregnant woman may not be engaged in night shift, work outside workday and work on holiday but serve in the field of light labour until she goes on maternity leave. A woman who constantly works on foot is secured the condition to sit down for 10-minute relaxation each hour and in the agricultural field pregnant women are forbidden from direct handling of insecticide or herbicide.

167. The institution or enterprise that has more than 20 female employees should be equipped with individual toilet, supply them with necessary material and medicament and organize regular health examination biannually.

168. The Government intensifies the supervision and control over labour protection work. The State supervision and control is assumed by the Ministry of Labour and the labour administration departments of the provincial, city or county people's committees. The Ministry of Labour has the department for the supervision over labour protection and stirs through it the supervisors at each factory, enterprise or organization so that they fulfill their function creditably. And any violation of the legislation on labor protection is punished either administratively or penally according to gravity. By article 92 of the Criminal Law a person in a responsible position who causes a loss of life or a serious accident because of a failure to provide labour protection and labour safety facilities, is committed to a reform institution for up to 2 years. And by article 96 of the same law, a person who makes a woman do the kind of work that is prohibited for women by law is committed to a reform institution for up to 1 year.

F. Social security

169. Every citizen, male or female, is entitled to State social insurance and social security. The right of a citizen to State social insurance and social security is provided for in the Constitution and the Labour Law and is elaborated in the Regulation on State Social Insurance and Social Security (Cabinet Decision No. 22, March 13, 1999). By article 7 of the regulation, a factory or office worker, male or female, is given subsidy when he or she is absent from work for illness, injury, attendance on a sick family member, nursing of a child, recuperation, etc. And the regulation provides for the pension for the bereaved family when a worker or a soldier is dead (article 34), funeral subsidy for the death of a factory or office worker (article 14), old age pension for a female citizen of over 55 years of age (article 30), pension for a worker who loses the capacity to work through illness or disability (article 31), subsidy for the family dependent on a serviceman of the army (article 36), dependant's subsidy when a family has no breadwinner (article 37 & 38) and nurses subsidy for a person who attends on a handicapped person (article 42).

170. Mothers are afforded special protection by the State and society. Article 77 of the Constitution states: "the State shall afford special protection to mothers and children by providing maternity leave, reduced working hours for mothers with many children, a wide network of maternity hospitals, crèche and kindergartens, and other measures. The State shall provide all conditions for a woman to play a full role in society."

171. By article 66 of the Labour Law, working women are entitled to maternity leave 60 days before and 90 days after childbirth irrespective of the length of their service in addition to the regular and additional holidays. And by the Regulation on State Social Insurance and Social Security, working women get maternity subsidy which is equal to 100% of the basic monthly salary during the maternity leave and the mothers of triplets or quadruplets receive special subsidy each month until the children finish the senior secondary school.

172. By the State measure to take care of the health of mothers of many children (Directive No. 46 of the Ministry of Labour Administration, May 24, 1998), mothers of 3 or more babies may temporarily retire from office for 9 months if they want from the 4th to the 12th month after childbirth and safety measures for labour protection are thoroughly taken lest the health of mothers is hindered. And an institution or an enterprise may not either refuse to admit or dismiss young women or mother of a baby arbitrarily and should get the approval of the city or county people's committee concerned even if there is a justifiable reason to do so.

173. The State provides mothers with every child care facility and condition to let them work with no worry. By article 31 of the Labour Law, the local government bodies and the relevant State organs, enterprises and social cooperative organizations develop nurseries, kindergartens, children's wards and public service facilities for the convenience of working women. At the preschool stage children are nursed and upbrought by nursery or kindergarten teachers. In the children's wards, doctors take care of children's health applying various kinds of medicaments and facilities.

174. The State permits women's temporary retirement from office for illness or family affairs if they want and lets them continue their work at the former job or position after it. Article 71 of the Regulation on Labour Discipline adopted by Cabinet Decision No. 10 on February 19, 2000 reads: "An institution, enterprise or organization may permit an employee to temporarily retire form office under the approval of the city or county labour administration organ if the employee himself or herself wants it for medical treatment, attendance on a sick family member, nursing of a baby and other reason. The period of retirement may not surpass 1 year." A factory or enterprise may not dismiss women when they retire temporarily from office on their own wish, whereby the issue of their reemployment does not occur.

Article 12. Equality in Access to Health Care

A. Health policies

175. The basic policies of the DPRK in public health are the enforcement of the complete universal free medical care, the maintenance of the prophylactic lines the training of able health workers and the development of medical science and technology, whereby the popular health system has been set up under which the State takes a responsible care of people's health.

176. By Article 9 of the Public Health Law: "the State provides every citizen with the benefits of complete free medical service. The workers, farmers, soldiers, working intellectuals and all the rest of citizens have the right to free medical treatment", every citizen is given the benefit of free medical service irrespective of sex, occupation, residential place, party affiliation and religious faith. All the health services are free including medicine, diagnosis, experimental test, treatment, operation, emergency call in-hospital treatment, health check-up, health consultation, vaccination and assistance in delivery, blood transfusion and prosthetics. Recuperation services and even the travel expenses to and from the places of recuperation are borne by the State.

177. Under article 3 and articles 18-28 of the Public Health Law, the State gives priority to the prophylactic line in public health. The State involves health and other agencies, enterprises and organizations in various sanitary propaganda and education activities so that the people themselves participate voluntarily in sanitary work, protect and look after their health in a scientific way and prevent diseases. Also, the State takes strict preventive measures against all kinds of industrial diseases and epidemics by preventing pollution, creating and preserving hygienic living and work environments, securing labour protection and hygienic protection supplies and improving sterilization, inoculation and medical inspection.

178. In order to carry out the prophylactic line, the Government further consolidates the household doctor system, an advanced health care system.

179. The State values the solution of the scientific and technical problems arising in the treatment and prevention of diseases and maintains the policy of developing medical science on Juche orientation by combining modern with traditional medicine.

180. The State trains medical workers in a planned way in conformity with the developing realities and sees to it that they, as engineers of human life and true servants of the people, devote their all to the treatment of patients and strengthen collective discussion in their medical activities.

181. The State directs special attention to the health protection of women and children and has advanced the principles and detailed needs of preferentially protecting their health in the Public Health Law and the Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children and their enforcement regulations.

B. Possibility of general or specific health care for women on the basis of nondiscrimination

182. Women are entitled to have the same health care as men and also special benefits from the State on the basis of nondiscrimination.

183. As all the preschool children are brought up in crèches and kindergartens at the expense of the State and society, women take an active part in public activities with no worries about their children. By the Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children, the State organs and social co-operative organizations are bound to build at the best places modern crèches and kindergartens equipped with the facilities for nursing, education, sports and amusement. And through such institutional measures as the system of responsible care of children under which the work of nursery or kindergarten teachers is evaluated by the health and intellectual development state of children, the State improves the nutritional, hygienic and intellectual care of children. At present, 3.5 million children go to crèches and kindergartens.

184. Child health care facilities have been arranged thoroughly wherever there are children, including children's hospitals, paediatric department in hospitals at various levels and child sick wards even in rural-ri, factories and enterprises.

185. Taking into account the physiological characteristics of women accounting for nearly half the population and labour force, the State takes special measures for the protection of their health. Health education for women through mass media and in particular through the universal 11-year compulsory education system greatly contributes to enhancing the general level of female sanitation and the curative and preventive health care by health institutions and doctors before and after childbirth plays an important role in the health protection of women. The DPRK has a well-organized health care system for women including the Pyongyang Maternity Hospital, maternal facilities in towns and countryside, gynaecological and obstetric sections in hospitals at all levels and the household doctor system.

186. Women are provided with quality antenatal care and assistance at childbirth in the above-mentioned health facilities.

187. The State grants special benefits to a mother who has more than one baby at a birth and the babies. Article 21 of the Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children stipulates: "The State grants special favours both to the mothers who have two or more babies at a birth and to the babies. The mothers are given a longer period of leave with pay after the childbirth. The State supplies triplets or quadruplets free with clothes, blankets, milk goods and other necessities for a specific period, grants subsidies for their upbringing till they reach school age and makes sure that the health of the babies and mothers is responsibly looked after by specifically designating medical workers for the purpose." Besides, there are such other health care measures for women as gynecological health care and female labour protection.

C. Basic health service in rural area

188. There is no great difference in basic health service for women between the towns and the countryside. However, there still remains some imbalance in health service and benefits according to rural areas. The quantitative and qualitative level of health service in remote mountainous areas with low population density, poor transportation and long service distance lags behind that of towns and plain areas. Even if by the policy of the Government on narrowing the gaps between town and country and equally improving people's living, the distinction between urban and rural areas has been fundamentally removed, some remote areas with nor railways or easy road condition, fewer population, long service distance and small hospital or clinic are equipped with fewer health workers and less medical facilities. And the doctors in such areas are hindered in improving their professional qualifications.

189. In order to reduce such difference, the Government, taking into consideration the characteristics of remote areas, set up a separate standard for allocating medical specialists per a certain number of population so that gynae-obstetricians and midwives be appointed there irrespective of the number of population, preferentially distributed ambulances to the mountainous country hospitals to ensure timely obstetric care including emergency attendance at childbirth, and saw to it that mobile reproductive health care activities be undertaken in such areas. As a result, the quality of service and the technical level of the health workers for reproductive care have been improving, the rate of early detection and timely referral of certain diseases such as tumors and inflammations of reproductive organs has been enhanced, and the morbidity of some gynecological diseases including infections of genital organs has been reduced. But still now, due to the shortage of medicaments, vehicles and medical apparatus including abdominal ultra-wave device, there are difficulties in increasing mobile service teams and ensuring routine services, especially in severely snowy winter. And the necessary tests (e.g. clamedia) are not conducted and the detected and diagnosed diseases adequately treated due to the lack of reagents, facilities and technique.

D. Maternal and family health care

190. The maternal and family health care is usually undertaken by the household doctors, gynecologists and obstetricians in conformity with their work plan. They visit the households under their charge, conduct health propaganda among women and take necessary measures for raising the awareness of the importance of breastfeeding. The child hospitals conduct, following the recommendation of the UNICEF "Baby-Friendly Hospital" campaign the essence of which is to promote breastfeeding. In the DPRK, breast-feeding is encouraged to last exclusively for 6 months at least after childbirth and be eventually combined with complementary feeding. The second multiple indicators survey in 2000 showed that the rate of breastfeeding was 90.7% at 0-3 months, 86.3% at 12-15 months and 36.5% at 20-23 months. And geographically, the figure was higher in the country than in the town.

E. Abortion

191. According to Directive No. 16 of the Ministry of Public Health (March 28, 1996), abortion is restricted to the extent possible. Only in the following cases, artificial abortion is permitted at the request of the woman herself and by the decision of doctor's consultation:

- A case where pregnancy may not be maintained because of disease or may arouse a social problem because of illegality. Secret is guaranteed for the latter case.
- A case where the unborn baby is diagnosed deformed.

F. Family planning

192. Family planning includes health protection of women, childbirth and the nursing and upbringing of children and is stipulated in various laws and regulations. Family planning is mapped out by individual families in view of their actual circumstances and in compliance with the laws, regulations, morality and customs. Family planning is assisted by the State and society in various ways. During the period of compulsory education, the senior secondary schools teach the subject of hygienics focusing on human anatomy and physiology and let girl students have the common knowledge of female menstruation and nursing of children form the 3rd to the 6th grades. And through household doctors, gynecologists, obstetricians and midwives, health institutions give people appropriate advices and medical or hygienic assistance concerning the family planning. Many books and magazines including Reader on Family Common Sense, Mother's Reader, Common Knowledge of Women's Hygiene and Health and Hygiene have been printed, disseminated or sold, and TV and radio deal with various family planning-related knowledge, all of which contributing to building up healthy and civilized families.

193. In particular, the nation-wide public health educational system facilitates the family planning. The mass sanitary propaganda and education is staged throughout the country by the Health Education Agency directly under the Ministry of Public Health in the centre, the health education hall in each province and the special health education doctors at each city or county hospital and hygienic prevention centre. The Health Education Agency is the centre of organizational, methodological and technical guidance of mass health education and a manufacturing basis of visual aids and propaganda materials such as publications and models for health education. The provincial health education halls provide organizational, methodological and technical guidance over the provincial health education work, under the Health Education Agency. And the special health education doctors in city or county hospitals and hygienic prevention centers provide health workers, schools, public institutions, cinemas and clubs within the city or county concerned with necessary health propaganda materials and leads the work of health education and sanitary propaganda by doctors, nurses, teachers and students.

194. All the State and social assistance to family planning is free of charge and there is no restriction to women's access to such services. As a public organization, the Korean Family Planning and MCH Association, too, plays an active role in family planning advice services.

195. Women have the decision of the spacing of children in view of their own wish, health condition and the like. But usually the spacing of children is determined by the discussion between the wife and the husband.

G. HIV and AIDS

196. Until now, there has been no HIV/AIDS cases reported. But since AIDS cases are increasing in the world, the DPRK, while conducting brisk health education activities for enhancing public awareness of the risk and effects of HIV/AIDS, particularly upon women and children, takes thorough preventive measures against AIDS. The Government has established a well-organized health propaganda system with the special organs for health education and propaganda as the core. The system proves very effective in the health enlightenment campaign to prevent HIV/AIDS. Such popular periodicals as the People's Health, the Population News and the Public Health Administration Bulletin, as well as non-periodicals carry articles on the risk of HIV/AIDS, and the information on AIDS is disseminated on a regular basis through TV and radio.

197. In the DPRK, the PHC networks have been densely distributed based on the district health system, whereby all people are fully provided with health care either in town or in the country. This enables women to actively participate in the prevention of HIV infection as primary family health protectors. In recent years, in view of the world-wide spread of HIV and AIDS, special attention is paid to information dissemination and sanitary enlightenment campaign through the enhanced role of women in PMC networks, and such activities are briskly under way not only in hospitals and clinics, but within the primary and secondary education system.

H. Narcotics

198. By Article 102 of the Criminal Law, a person who illegally grows opium poppies, who produces, possesses or uses narcotics or poisonous drugs or who supplies them to others are strictly punished. Up to now, there have been no narcotic abuse nor drug crimes reported among women.

Article 13. Social and Economic Benefits

A. Economic benefits

199. In the DPRK, the means of production are owned by the public and the State bears the overall responsibility for the food, clothing and housing of the people. This produces quite a few differences in women's economic life from other countries.

200. The major issues of women's economic life have been basically described in the parts of this report on employment, public health and education.

201. Other information required by article 13 is as follows. In the DPRK, nobody is excepted from the State and public care or benefits. Factory or office workers, cooperative organization staff and their dependants are supplied by the State with food at a nearly free price and with house free of charge. Schoolchildren are secured school uniforms and school things at a cheap price and all inhabitants get basic food and mass consumption goods at a low unitary price. There are a lot of benefits by the system of child nursing and upbringing at the State and public expense, the 11-year compulsory free education system, the scholarship system, the free medical care system, the paid maternity leave system, the recuperation and rest system at the State expense, the State social insurance and security system, etc. And following the principles of "The best things to children" and attentively caring for women, the State offers various child and women based family benefits including the preferential free supply of a house with 2-3 living rooms to a family with 3 or more children, subsidization of 50% price of children's goods and school things, special subsidy for the mothers of more than 4 children, etc.

B. Sports and cultural activities

202. The State enables women to freely participate in sports activities on an equal footing with men. The Law on Physical Culture provides for the popularization and turning into daily routine of physical culture and sports as the basic policy along with the conditions and guarantees for the realization.

203. The policy of popularization and turning sports activities into daily routine of people is based on the premise of nondiscrimination of sexes. Following the Law on Physical Culture and its enforcement regulation, school education in physical culture is considered to be most important in the popularization and turning into daily routine of sports activities. The State sees to it that the educational institutions improve the quality of school education to harmoniously develop the physical bodies of children and endow children with the fundamental knowledge of sports and more than one technique of physical culture, let children regularly have the exercises of field and track, ball games, swimming, etc., organize extra-curricular sports activities in conformity with the aptitude, talent, season and local characteristics, and operate teams for various sports events. The institutions for child nursing and upbringing also organize sports activities good for the growth of the children at the preschool age.

204. To popularize sports and turn them into daily routine of people, the State encourages the mass gymnastic display which combines sports technique and artistic skills. The State leads institutions, enterprises and organizations to form and regularly run non-standing boards of popular physical culture, operates the month and

day of physical culture and frequently organizes various popular exercises and sports events. The State encourages families to have exercises or running for physical training, organizes examinations of physical strength at institutions, enterprises and organizations and hosts frequent national, local or branch events. The active role of women is underscored in the development of sports techniques and science, too. The central and local institutions, enterprises and organizations as well as parks and recreational grounds have various kinds of stadiums, playgrounds, sports or amusement facilities. The DPRK has many female athletes and women occupy no less proportion than men among the masters of sports and national, global or Olympic champions.

205. In other aspects of cultural life too, the Government firmly maintains the policy of popularization and daily routinization. The State directs deep attention to enhancing cultural attainments of people from their early age. Schools have literary and artistic subjects in their curriculum and the scenic spots and the necessary places have schoolchildren's palace (or hall), camp, fun fair, children's park and the like for the cultural activities of young people. There are 40 odd schoolchildren's palaces on a nation-wide scale, which serve as comprehensive bases of extracurricular activities. Schoolchildren come to the palaces after school to join artistic activities of their choice. The Government plans to construct such schoolchildren's halls in every city or county in near future. The children's camps across the country admit more than 112 thousand schoolchildren every year and the coastal city Wonsan has the International Children's Camp.

206. Schools operate various artistic circles for children to take part in the activities. Each year witnesses various literary or artistic contests at the central, provincial and county levels, including the national schoolchildren's art festival or solo contest, the national exhibition of literary works and models of scientific imagination, kindergarten children's art festival, etc.

207. The State, following the policy of popularizing literature and art, provides every condition for the vast population to fully participate in cultural activities at the expense of the State, institution, enterprise or social cooperative organization. There are the grand theatre, art theatre, drama theatre, cinemas and various other cultural facilities at the centre and each province, the cultural hall in each county and the cultural hall or cultural propaganda hall at institutions and enterprises. The State organs, enterprises, social cooperative organizations, educational institutions and all other units of working people organize art circles and artistic agitation groups so that all people including workers, peasants, youth and students may participate in literary and artistic activities according to their wish. And on meaningful occasions, the singing contests of workers, peasants or housewives, the national art festival, the national drama festival, the prize contest of literary and artistic works, the art exhibition, the photo exhibition and various cultural activities are organized for anybody to widely participate in. Those who have contributed excellent creations or performances are awarded a prize. Thus workers, peasants, youth and students personally create novels, poems, drama scripts, songs, dance, fine art works to be presented to festivals or performances and those who are found promising are selected to be brought up into professionals, gaining fame.

Article 14. Rural Women

208. In the DPRK, rural women indiscriminately enjoy every legal right on the principle of complete equality with rural men and urban women in not only political but also economic, social and cultural fields. The partial gap between urban and rural women in economic life is the product of the current technical and cultural backwardness of the countryside as compared with the cities and the natural and geographical conditions of the countryside.

209. The proportions of urban and rural women are 60.2% and 39.8%.

A. Participation in the elaboration and implementation of planning

210. As every sector of the State and social life is based on planning in its management and development, so the rural construction and the agricultural development rely on planning in the DPRK. Women are the masters and play the master's role in the elaboration and implementation of the planning for the rural construction and the agricultural development.

211. Article 5 of the Law on Agriculture provides: "The masters of agricultural production and management are the agricultural working people. The State shall let agricultural working people participate in the agricultural production and management as masters by respecting their will and requirements and giving full scope to their creativity and activeness."

212. Agricultural working women play an important role in the agricultural production, management and the creation of the living environment of each cooperative farm. A cooperative farm organized with a *ri* as a unit is an independent production unit and a life unit where the working people, male or female, own the land, farm machines and other production means publicly for collective management. Rural working women assume the obligation as well as right to formulate the plan for the farm development and personally participate in its implementation and summing-up. Practical realities show that women have a high voice in the discussion of any issue of the cooperative farm and play an important role in their settlement. The fact that nearly half of the chairpersons of cooperative farm management are women is one example.

B. Public health

213. Rural women are guaranteed by the State the right to the same medical service as that of urban women. This right is realized by the development of rural *ri* clinics into hospitals.

214. The right of rural women to have access to adequate health care facilities is ensured by hospitalization of all rural *ri* clinics and the establishment of a children's ward in every *ri* following Directive No. 9 of the Ministry of Public Health, April 12, 1973: " On Organizing and Operating Rural *Ri* Hospitals" and Directive No. 254 of the Administration Council, December 22, 1978: "On the Improvement of the Management and Operation of *Ri* People's Hospitals" and other policies and directives of the State.

215. Rural women have access to preventive and special medical care and family planning services which are not so different from urban women. In rural *ri* hospitals, in conformity with the household doctor system, a doctor offers the households under his or her charge the services of counseling in pregnancy, health checkup, midwifery, maternity protection, prevention and cure of women's diseases, family planning and the like.

C. Socia' security

216. Rural women are entitled to the benefit of the State social insurance and social security like the factory and office workers. Until the 1960s this benefit was granted only to the factory and office workers of the State institutions and enterprises and not to the members of a cooperative organization (a cooperative farm or corporation). After that, in view of the developing realities, the Government enlarged the benefit to cooperative farmers and other cooperative staff.

217. The current Regulation on State Social Insurance and Social Security provides: "This Regulation shall be applied to the factory or office workers, cooperative farmers and cooperative staff working in State institution, enterprises and social cooperative organizations and the citizens who enjoy the benefit of State social insurance and social security." Under this regulation rural women enjoy indiscriminately such benefits of State social insurance as provisional subsidy, maternity grant, special grants-in-aid, funeral subsidy, grant for recuperation,

rest or visit, etc. and of State social security as social security pension or subsidy, guarantee of the livelihood of the disabled and the old who have nobody to care for, etc. like factory and office workers.

D. Education and training

218. The rural women who have finished the 11-year compulsory education get various types of training and education, formal and nonformal, according to their hope and aptitude, in order to increase their technical proficiency. They can either go to the agricultural or farm machine college at each county for 3-year regular education in crop raising, fruit growing, animal husbandry, etc. or be enrolled in field correspondence study course. This course is for the education in the curriculum of an agricultural college at the farmers' slack season from October to March each year within 3 years by the college teachers who come out to the farms to teach at a farm lecture hall or a room for the dissemination of science and technology. The graduates qualify as associate engineers.

219. Women in rural areas may either go to the university of agriculture set up in each province, the university of agriculture and forestry or animal husbandry and veterinary work for regular education, or study for 5 years at a farm college which is organized with the county as a unit and gives correspondence education twice a year for 5 months at the farmers' slack seasons. The graduates qualify as engineers.

220. Women in rural areas may be educated for 2 years at the agricultural cadre's school established in each province to qualify as management officials of agriculture. Those who work in a farm immediately after the 11-year compulsory education are trained technically at the schools for agricultural skill training in each county.

E. Living conditions

221. The State is improving the living conditions of rural women up to the level of towns by putting forward various such policies as construction of modern dwellings for farmers at the expense of the State, introduction of water service in rural areas, introduction of bus services in the countryside, etc. and vigorously pushing ahead with their realization.

222. The Government, while providing rural people with the conditions of dwelling, sanitation, electricity, water supply, transportation, communications, etc. at the expense of the State, encourages cooperative farms and individual rural households to do what they can. However, there are difficulties due to the successive natural disasters for several years. Especially, the unprecedentedly severe flood that swept the whole country in 1995 followed by other natural disasters washed away or buried many dwellings and water supply or drainage network causing serious problems of rural livelihood. The State, under the target of constructing dwellings for 500,000 households in rural areas after 1995, launched the construction campaign and the work to supply stable water to all population.

Article 15. Equality before the Law and in Civil Matters

223. The DPRK considers complete equality of men and women before the law and in civil matters as an important issue for the reliable defense and realization of social justice and invariably guarantees it.

A. Equality before the law

224. The constitutional principle of sex equality in every field of State and social life includes equal status and right of men and women before the law. By this constitutional principle and the laws concerned, everybody is entitled to equality before the law and the equal and indiscriminate protection by the law. The DPRK legislation is equally applied to both men and women except some provisions of special protection of women and some peculiar to men on the basis of non-discrimination.

B. Equality in civil matters

225. The Civil Law provides in article 19: "A citizen acquires civil rights with his or her birth and loses them with his or her death. All citizens are equal with regard to civil rights. No one can limit his or her civil rights unless otherwise provided for in law." And in article 20: "A citizen's age of majority is 17 years. When a citizen reaches 17 years of age, he or she may act under the civil law independently. When a person reaches 16 years of age, he or she may act under the civil law independently within the bounds of his or her remuneration and when the act under the civil law goes beyond the bounds he or she may conduct it with the consent of his or her parents or his or her guardian. But any minor of six and above may perform such an act as buying schoolthings and sundry goods for daily use."

226. And Chapter 4, Part II of the Civil Law which is on individual ownership of citizens provides in article 58: "Individual property is property for the use of individual working people. Individual property is derived from socialist distribution according to work done, additional benefits granted by the State and society, products of the inhabitants' supplementary husbandry including those of small plots, property bought or inherited by a citizen or presented to him or her and other property lawfully acquired." And in article 59: "A citizen may own a house, household and cultural goods needed by his or her family and other necessaries of life, cars and other items." The Civil Law also states that a citizen may freely possess, use or dispose of his or her property, the citizens of a family jointly own the family property and the right to inherit individual property is ensured.

227. As seen above, women are completely equal with men in ownership which is the basis of all civil matters. Women personally own money and property, and are free to conclude various contracts for purchase or sale, labour service, safekeeping, borrowing, passenger traffic, bank deposit, life or property insurance, mandate, loan, etc. in their own names subject to the Civil Law. And they assume civil responsibility when they have violated the civil rights of others or their own civil obligations.

C. Equality in courts

228. Women are entitled either to be elected a judge and a people's assessor or to qualify as a lawyer on equal terms with men. In the election or qualification, there is no restriction or exclusion on the ground of sex.

229. By the Constitution and the Regulation on the Election of Judges and People's Assessors, the judges and the people's assessors of the courts at all levels are elected at the corresponding people's assemblies. A DPRK citizen, male or female, may become a judge only if he or she has the degree of law expert acknowledged by the State and enjoys a high reputation among people for his or her devoted service. The tribunal for the first trial is composed of one judge and two people's assessors. The workers, peasants, intellectuals and public official, male or female may be elected a people's assessor if he or she has the deep confidence of the masses and the basic knowledge of law. A people's assessor has the same authority in a trial as a judge. Women account for about 10% of the judges of the courts at different levels.

230. Anybody, male or female, may be a lawyer if he or she has the degree of law expert, has worked in the field of law for more than 5 years, or has an expert's degree of a certain field and has passed a lawyer's examination after training in law.

231. According to the Criminal Procedures Act and the Civil Proceedings Act, women may also be a witness. There is no discrimination against a woman's opportunity of testimony or the importance, effect, etc. of her testimony. In the DPRK, for the convenience of children and their mothers, the trial related with the expense of child upbringing or the claim for sustenance allowance, the plaintiff of which is a woman, and the trial of a case instituted by a mother of a child under 1 year old or of many children is conducted by a court which exercises jurisdiction over the district of the plaintiff's residence, and a woman may lodge a lawsuit related with the expense of child upbringing and the claim for sustenance allowance without paying service-charge under the principle of child preference. Except these child or woman preferences, there is no discrimination against women.

D. Freedom of movement and choice of residence

232. The freedom of movement and the freedom to choose one's residence belong to every citizen, irrespective of sex, as a constitutional right, (article 75 of the Constitution). Citizens are free to travel to any place of the country on public or private business subject to the Regulation on Travel Order. By article 4 of the regulation, the area along the Military Demarcation Line, the military base, the district of munitions industry and some specific security-related areas are travel restrictive. One may travel to these areas only on official business, a visit to family or relative and other reasonable grounds. A citizen, male or female, may leave the country for travel or residence abroad, or come back home subject to the Immigration Law and the Regulation on Passport and Visa.

233. The choice of residence is closely related with employment and depends on the free will of citizens. When one wants to move his or her residence, he or she should go through such procedures as registration of removal and settlement.

234. Husband and wife are equally accorded the right to freedom of movement and choice of residence. In a family, movement and the choice of residence follow the common interest and the agreement of the family members as well as the husband and wife. If the husband and wife have different opinions, each may follow his or her choice. Such gap of opinions is not supposed to be settled by judicial or administrative means.

Article 16. Equality in Marriage and Family Law

A. Right to marriage

235. Article 8 of the Family Law provides: "Citizens are entitled to marry freely. Marriage shall be undertaken between a single male and a single female." In the DPRK, marriage is entered into on the basis of true love, free choice and full consent. Such marriage is strictly forbidden as the one that is entered into against the will of the male or the female, himself or herself, by money, coercion, allurement, the outmoded feudal customs, and the like.

236. Marriage is effective when it has gone through legal procedures. By article 11 of the Family Law marriage is recognized legally and protected by the State only after it is properly registered at a registry office and a married life is forbidden in cases where the marriage is not registered.

237. By article 13 of the Family Law, a marriage that is not based on the free consent of the parties, a marriage under the minimum age for marriage (18 years for males and 17 years for females) a marriage with a person who already has a registered husband or wife and a marriage between blood relatives up to and including third cousins, or between relatives by marriage up to and including first cousins is null and void. A marriage may be declared

invalid by the court. By article 14 of the Family Law, a marriage that is recognized as invalid is regarded as never having taken place.

B. Rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution

238. Article 16 of the Family Law states that the relationship between husband and wife is established through marriage and article 18 of the same law provides: "The husband and the wife shall have equal rights within the family". The husband and the wife retain his or her family name and given name, and may choose an occupation according to his or her wish and aptitude to take part in the socio-political life.

239. By articles 15 and 19 of the Family Law, the husband and the wife are duty-bound to ensure that their families are harmonious and cheerful and to support their partner should he or she have lost the ability to work.

240. By article 21 of the Family Law, divorce may be granted if a marriage cannot be continued because one party has been guilty of gross infidelity to conjugal love and trust, or for some other reason. Once divorced, the relationship between husband and wife is nullified. Divorce is granted by the court. The average annual number of divorce in recent years was about 2000. The comparatively fewer divorce is not due to any legislation that makes divorce difficult. Since olden times, it has been a traditional national custom peculiar to the Korean people for a married couple to live together until they die. At the dissolution of marriage, there is no special consideration except the interest of the child. It is not permitted for a married couple to live apart or with another partner without divorce procedures.

C. Rights and responsibilities as parents with regard to children

241. Parents have equal rights and responsibilities in matters relating to their children. In all relations between parents and children, the interest of children is always paramount. By articles 27 and 28 of the Family Law both parents have the same obligation to educate and daily care for the health and growth of their children. Article 136 of the Criminal Law provides that a person who, in duty bound to protect the children, causes grave consequences by deliberately not doing so shall be committed to a criminal punishment.

242. By article 22 of the Family Law, the custody of children in cases of divorce is decided according to mutual agreement between the two parties, in consideration of the interests of the children. When no mutual agreement can be reached, custody is decided by the court. A child under three years of age is brought up by the mother, unless there is a compelling reason for this not to happen. A person who does not support his or her child should pay the party who has custody of the child expenses for the feeding and care of the child until it reaches the working age. The amount contributed towards the bringing up of a child is fixed by the court within the range of 10-30 per cent of the monthly income of the contributor, according to the number of children.

243. By articles 30-34 of the Family Law, citizens may adopt the children of other people. Adoption is realized when the request by the adoptive parents has been approved by the population administration office and registered at the registry office. The relationship between adoptive parents and an adopted child is the same as that between blood parents and a child. The dissolution of an adoption is realized after agreement between the adopted child and its adoptive parents or between the adoptive parents and the adopted child's real parents or guardian is reached and it is registered at the registry office with the approval of the relevant population administration office. When no agreement can be reached, the matter is settled by the court.

244. By article 25 of the Family Law, the relationship between illegitimate children and their parents is the same as that between legitimate children and their parents. For the relationship between children and parents is the tie of kinship in all cases.

245. The decision of the number and spacing of children exclusively belongs to the husband, wife and the family, and the State, therefore, has not established any legal or administrative regulations for this. However, the State

requires that the husband and the wife have the same right and responsibility in determining it based on sex equality. And in view of the national shortage of labour, the State encourages childbirth. Hence the title of maternal heroine. In the DPRK, it is one of the social and moral customs to respect the opinions of both husband and wife, and rationally combine the requirements of the family and the society in deciding the number and spacing of children. But in cases where the wife has a reason for health consideration, the opinion of the wife prevails. On rare occasions, grandparents demand childbirth until they have a grandson. No case of divorce had been reported due to the disagreement between husband and wife in the matter of the number and spacing of their children.

D. Right to property

246. Both spouses have the same rights in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property. They may separately own, administrate and dispose of the property of personal nature and under article 61 of the Civil Law have the co-ownership of the family property that has been acquired for the common use of the family on an equal footing.

247. By article 39 of the Family Law, in cases where family members are separated because of divorce or for some other reason the property of individuals that they either brought in when they were coming into the family or were given by inheritance, presentation, etc. is owned by each individual and family property is divided among the parties concerned through mutual agreement. If no agreement can be reached, the matter is settled by the court.

Article 29. Arbitration

248. The DPRK insists on the settlement of any dispute between the States parties concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention by means of negotiation. The DPRK therefore has made a reservation concerning article 29, paragraph 1 of the CEDAW.

ANNEX

Statistical Tables

Table 1: Background of the country

Indicator	1993	1999	2000
Total population	21,213,000	22,754,000	22,963,000
Average lifespan	72.7	66.8	67.1
GNP per capita	991 USD	453 USD	463 USD
GNP (million USD)	20,882	10,265	10,593

Table 2: Population and composition by province

Province	Population(1000)	% of total
Pyongyang city	3,084.4	13.4
South Pyongan	3,050.7	13.2
South Hamgyong	2,929.8	12.8
North Pyongan	2,437	11.4
North Hamgyong	2,221.3	9.7
South Hwanghae	2,224	9.7
North Hwanghae	1,665.4	7.2
Kangwon	1,406.1	6.1
Jagang	1,239.2	5.4
Nampo city	792.3	3.5
Ryanggang	686.9	3.0
Kaesong	363.2	1.6

Table 3: Population in urban and rural areas (%)

Urban area	Rural area
60.2	39.8

Table 4: Households

Year	Number of households (1000)
1993	4,813
2000	5,693

Table 5: Male/Female employment rate in different sectors (Unit: 1000)

Classification		Industry	Agri-culture	Construction & Geology	Transport & Commu-nication	Commerce & Procurement	Education, Culture & Public health	Land & City administration
1995	Male	2,001	1,751	350	294	161	348	157
	Female	2,283	1,703	110	121	353	515	101
1999	Male	2,063	1,806	367	310	169	356	161
	Female	2,347	1,761	115	124	360	530	104

Table 6: Average life span

Year	Average	Male	Female
1936-1940	38.4	37.3	39.5
1957	57.0	55.0	59.0
1960	58.3	56.0	59.0
1964	59.9	57.5	61.9
1969	63.8	62.0	68.0
1972	66.0	62.9	68.9
1986	74.3	70.9	77.3
1991	74.5	71.0	77.6
1993	72.7	68.4	76.0
1996	70.1	67.3	75.0
1999	66.8	62.8	70.7
2000	67.13	63.04	70.94

Table 7: Major health indices (‰)

Year	Birth rate	Mortality	Infant mortality
1995	40.5	20.9	56.4
1960	38.5	10.5	37.0
1970	44.7	7.0	22.7
1980	21.8	4.5	14.2
1990	22.0	5.9	9.2
1993	20.0	5.5	14.1
1996	20.1	6.8	18.6
1998	18.2	9.3	23.5
1999	17.8	8.9	22.5
2000	17.5	8.8	21.8

Table 8: Number of technicians and experts

Year	Number (1000)
1993	1,730
1998	1,895

Table 9: Number of medical doctors

Year	Number of medical doctors Per 10,000 population
1995	30
1998	44

Table 10: External debt, unemployment and adult illiteracy

Year	External debt (million USD)	Unemployment	Adult illiteracy
1999	4,430	-	-
2001	4,701	-	-

Table 11: Medical service for women before childbirth (2000)

Area	Person delivering antenatal care					Service by medical worker	Number of women surveyed
	No service	Doctor	Nurse	Midwife	Other		
Urban	2.6	44.6	1.3	50.9	0.6	96.8	707
Rural	2.4	30.9	2.4	64.2	0.1	97.6	531

Table 12: Assistance at childbirth (2000)

Area	Person assisting at delivery					Service by medical worker	Number of women surveyed
	No service	Doctor	Nurse	Midwife	Other		
Urban	0.1	42.5	2.3	53.5	1.6	98.3	707
Rural	0.5	28.1	3.4	63.2	4.8	94.7	531